

Filing a Third Party Complaint in CM/ECF

A third party complaint is a complaint or claim filed by a defendant against a party who is not in the case. This document will bring the new party into the case as a third party defendant. Filing a third party complaint involves selecting which type of document you are filing, entering the case number, selecting the party who is filing the claim, adding the party whom the complaint is against, selecting the pdf document, modifying the docket text, and accepting the final docket text.

STEP 1 After you have logged in to CM/ECF, click on **Civil** on the ECF Main Menu.

STEP 2 The system will display the **Civil Events** screen.

- Click on **Complaints and Other Initiating Documents** in the Initial Pleadings and Service section.



STEP 3 The system will next display the Case Number screen for you to enter the case in which the document is to be filed.

- The number of the last case accessed will be displayed. If this is the correct case, just click **Next**. If it is not, enter the correct case number and then click **Next**.

STEP 4 The system will display the **Complaints and Other Initiating Documents** screen, for you to select the type of document being filed.

- Select the Third Party Complaint, then click **Next**.



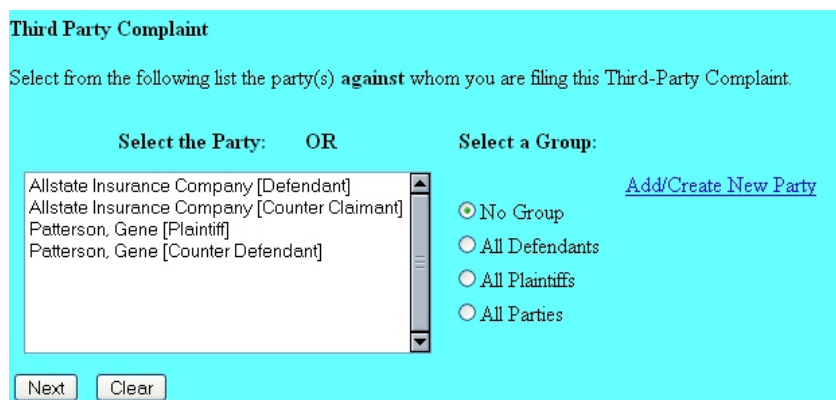
STEP 5 The system will then display the **Filer Selection** screen.

- On this screen you select the party who is filing the document. The name(s) of the parties you select will appear in the docket text. Then click **Next**.

NOTE: If you select a group (All Defendants, All Plaintiffs, or All Parties) on the right side of the screen, rather than selecting the party(ies) by name on the left side of the screen, the group name, such as “all defendants,” will appear in the docket text, rather than the names of the individual party(ies).

STEP 6 The system will then display the **Party Selection** screen.

- Select the party **against** whom the complaint is being filed. Since this is a third party complaint, against a party who is not already on the case, you must add the party to the case. Therefore, click on **Add/Create New Party** on the right side of the screen.



STEP 7 The system will then display the **Party Search** screen.

- On this screen you enter the party's last name or business name, or the first few letters of the name, and then click **Search**.

STEP 8 The system will then display the **Search Results** screen.

- If your search found the party you want, select it, and skip to Step 10.
- If your search did find a "match" but it is not the correct one, you must add the party to the database. To do this, click **Create new party**.



NOTE: If there had been no matches for the entered name, the system would have displayed the message **No person found**. You could then either search again with different information or click **Create new party**.

Search hints for names:

- ▶ You must enter at least two consecutive letters or characters of the party's last name or business name.
- ▶ This search is not case sensitive. You can enter either Smith or smith.
- ▶ A wild card (*) is not required at the end of a search string. Entering "wi," "Wi," or "wi*" will find Bob Williams and Wilson's Auto Parts, but will not find Willie Smith because the "wi" is in his first name.
- ▶ You can enter a wild card before the letters, if desired, to take the place of other letters. If you enter "*am," for example, you will find Bob Cunningham; Judy Amstutz; and United States of America, but will not find Dick Armstrong because the letters are not consecutive.
- ▶ Try alternate searches if your first search is not successful. Be sure the name you want is not already in the database before you add it.

STEP 9 The system will display the **Party Information** screen.

- On this screen you must enter any appropriate information about the new party. Enter the party's first name and change their role to **Third Party Defendant**. You will not add personal information (i.e. address, phone number, etc.) at this time.
- Once you have the party's name entered and role selected, click **Submit**.

The screenshot shows the 'Party Information' form with the following fields and values:

Last name	State Farm Fire and Casualty	First name	
Middle name		Generation	
Title			
Role	Third Party Defendant (3pd:pty)	Pro se	no
Prisoner Id		Office	
Unit		Address 1	
Address 2		Address 3	
City		State	
County		Zip	
Country		Country	
Phone		Fax	
E-mail			
Party text			
Start date	5/1/2006		

Buttons: Submit, Cancel, Clear

STEP 10 The system will then display the **Party Selection** screen again.

- This time, however, the list includes the new party you added. Click on that party, if necessary, to select them, then click **Next**.

The screenshot shows the 'Third Party Complaint' screen with the following elements:

Select from the following list the party(s) **against** whom you are filing this Third-Party Complaint.

Select the Party: OR Select a Group:

[Add/Create New Party](#)

Selected Party: State Farm Fire and Casualty Company [Third Party Defendant]

Other parties in list: Allstate Insurance Company [Defendant], Allstate Insurance Company [Counter Claimant], Patterson, Gene [Plaintiff], Patterson, Gene [Counter Defendant]

Selected Group: ☒ No Group, ☐ All Defendants, ☐ All Plaintiffs, ☐ All Parties

Buttons: Next, Clear

NOTE: If you have more than one new party to add, click on **Add/Create New Party** again, then select all appropriate parties when you go back to this screen.

STEP 11 The system will then display the **pdf document** screen.

- To associate a pdf file with this entry, you can either enter the path and filename of the document with the .pdf extension, if you know it, in the **Filename** field, or you can click **Browse...** to find it. If you click **Browse...**, the system will display a **File Upload** screen.
- On this screen, you should click on the down arrow for the **Files of type:** field at the bottom and select "All Files (*.*)" This screen will then show all files, including .pdf files. Then, if the desired file is not displayed, either double-click on any directory or folder icon to go down the directory structure, or click on the "Up One Level" icon, to go up the directory structure.
- Navigate to the directory where the appropriate pdf file is located, then click on it to select it. To make sure you are associating the correct file, you can view the selected file by right-clicking on the filename.
- On this menu, click **Open**. The system will launch the Adobe Acrobat Reader to display the contents of the pdf document. With that you can verify that this is the correct document.
- If this is the correct document, close the Adobe Acrobat Reader by clicking on the **X** in the top right corner, then click **Open** on the File Upload screen. This will return you to the pdf document screen.
- If this is not the correct file, close this window, navigate to a different directory, if necessary, and open another file until you find the correct pdf file.
- If this document has attachments, you would click **Yes** at the bottom. The system would then let you enter the pdf filenames and descriptions of the attachments.
- Click **Next** to continue.

STEP 12 The system will prompt you to certify that service has been accomplished in accordance with the Federal Rules and Local Rules of this Court. This does not take the place of the Certificate of Service that should be included in your filing. Click **Next** to continue.

STEP 13 The system will display the **Modify Docket Text** screen.

- On this screen you can add to the docket text in the blank boxes as appropriate. When the docket text is accurate, click **Next**.

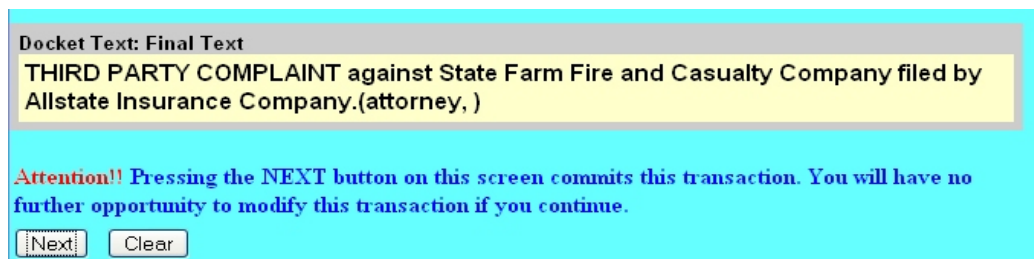


Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate.

THIRD PARTY COMPLAINT against State Farm
Fire and Casualty Company filed by Allstate Insurance Company. (attorney,)

STEP 14 The system will display the **Final Docket Text** screen.

- This is your **last chance** to correct any errors in the transaction. If the transaction is NOT correct, click **Back** on your browser to return to the screen where the error was made, fix the error, then proceed again through the transaction.
- If the transaction and the text are correct, click **Next**.



Docket Text: Final Text

THIRD PARTY COMPLAINT against State Farm Fire and Casualty Company filed by Allstate Insurance Company.(attorney,)

Attention!! Pressing the NEXT button on this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this transaction if you continue.

Next Clear

STEP 15 Finally, the system will display the **Notice of Electronic Filing** screen.

- The **Notice of Electronic Filing** is the verification that the filing has been sent electronically to the court's database. It certifies that this is now an official court document.
- To print a copy of this notice, click **Print**.
- To save a copy of this receipt, click **File**, then **Save As...** on the browser menu.
- When you arrive at the **Notice of Electronic Filing** screen, you are finished with the filing of your document. You can select a choice from the ECF Main Menu. For example, you can click on **Civil** to file another document. If you are finished, you should click on **Logout**.

Note: It is the responsibility of the filer to send hard copies of the pleading and Notice of Electronic Filings to attorneys and pro se parties who have indicated they do not have E-Mail accounts established with the Court.